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SIPDIS

STATE FOR IO/EDA, IO/T, AF/EPS, PRM, EEB/OIA for Heather Goethert,
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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KUNR](#) [UNCTAD](#) [XA](#) [EAID](#)

SUBJECT: ECOSOC - ONE UN RWANDA WORKING WELL

¶1. SUMMARY. In a July 15 special session on the One UN Rwanda program, organized by the UN Chief Executive Board (CEB) Interagency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity during the Operational Activities Segment of the Economic and Social Council meeting in Geneva, the UN Resident Coordinator for Rwanda and the Rwandan Ambassador praised the One UN program in Rwanda and emphasized their commitments to measurable results, transparency, and good governance. Rwanda is one of eight pilot One UN countries worldwide and was highlighted by the UN Cluster for its successful program.
END SUMMARY.

Goals

¶2. UNCTAD Deputy Secretary General Petko Draganov outlined three main goals for the special session on One UN Rwanda: first, to learn about the progress achieved in Rwanda under the One UN program; second, to explain through the example of Rwanda, how operational and financial agendas under one UN can be implemented to enhance development; and third, to show how the CEB Interagency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity operates.

Review of Progress of "One UN" Process in Rwanda

¶3. The UN Resident Coordinator (RC) for Rwanda, Mr. Aurelien Agbenonci, said the basis for One UN operations in Rwanda was laid out in the Common Operational Document (COD) which was signed by the Government of Rwanda and the UN in July 2007. This programmatic document specified how the UN in Rwanda would construct and implement the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Rwanda, so that the UNDAF would provide a collective, coherent and integrated United Nations response to national needs and priorities, as outlined in the Rwandan Government's Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDRPS) and Vision 2020.

¶4. The RC emphasized that the clear definition of UN agencies' roles and mechanisms for interaction with the GOR contained in the COD, and the deliberate effort to elaborate Rwanda's UNDAF so that it was consistent with Rwanda's EDRPS and promotes Rwanda's Vision 2020, were crucial to the positive impact of the One UN effort. Those well defined relationships and expectations have allowed streamlining of UN interactions with the GOR, and have ensured that the UN programs in Rwanda have measurable results that contribute to the GOR's overall development objectives.

¶5. The RC reported that Rwanda expects progress in internal and external communications as a common Communication Strategy is being developed by the UN Communication Group, which is composed of

communication focal points in each of the 13 UN agencies working in Rwanda. The common Communication Strategy will govern: how information is shared within, and among, UN agencies; and how each agency and the country team communicate externally (with a strong emphasis on consistency of messaging and brand management).

¶16. Following the presentations, US Mission Officer inquired about the methods of performance measurement. According to the RC, there are six UNDAF theme groups (Governance; HIV; Health, Nutrition and Population; Education; Environment; Sustainable Growth and Social Protection) that serve as coordination mechanisms to ensure the development, implementation, quality, coherence and consistency of the UNDAF results and to report on program implementation. The six groups compile UNDAF results, including indicators of achievement identified in the UNDAF Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, outcomes and output-level data throughout the program life cycle. The monitoring and evaluation process is well defined. However, since the One UN Rwanda program only has a one year track-record, the RC said it is too early to show development impact from Delivering as One.

Implementation of Operational and Financial Frameworks

¶17. According to the RC, Rwanda implemented its One UN Program to improve its chances of meeting the Millennium Development Goals through great coherence and efficiency. The program is fully aligned with GOR's national priorities, and is based on principles such as joint programming, strategic focus on a results-driven UN, and inclusiveness of government and UN bodies. The RC mentioned achievements made in Rwanda in 2008 and its ongoing commitment to enhancing trade capacity to emphasize Rwanda's progress in

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development under the One UN Program. The RC attributed the successful implementation of the One UN Program in Rwanda to the high level GOR commitment to making One UN Rwanda effective.

¶18. On the financial side, resources are allocated out to the most effective programs under the One budgetary framework. According to the RC, the implementation of such financial mechanism has encouraged agencies to be results-oriented. The Minister of Finance and Economic Planning of Rwanda chairs the One UN Steering Committee, which provides guidance and oversees the implementation of the One UN effort. The Steering Committee is also responsible for ensuring that the One UN Program is closely aligned with, and implements the UNDAF Outcomes (e.g. development goals), the Rwandan Government's EDPRS (Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy), Vision 2020, and the MDGs.

CEB Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade Productive Capacity

¶19. The CEB Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade Productive Capacity consists of 13 members: UNCTAD, which chairs the Cluster, UNIDO, FAO, ITC, WTO, UNDP, the 5 UN Regional Commissions, UNEP, and UNOPS. A senior officer from the Office of the Director General of UNIDO, Richard Kennedy, praised the Cluster for promoting more effective program delivery and inclusion of non-resident agencies' programs in UNDAFs. Kennedy said that the Cluster has become an important interagency mechanism that allows the 13 participating agencies to build a coherent and cooperatives set of trade and development-related programs into a beneficiary's UNDAF.

¶110. Panelists described various successful Cluster activities in Rwanda. They highlighted trade capacity building and technical assistance related to trade, training for UN Country Teams on trade-related programs, and a series of other training programs for RCs to help the RC raise his country teams' awareness of the government's national priorities and economic agenda.

¶111. Rwandan Ambassador Sebudande praised the efficiencies gained from the One UN effort and the commitment of the UN inter-agency team to ensure its work aligned with national priorities. She confirmed the Rwandan government's commitment to constructing a base for economic growth and food security while building resilience among its people to social and economic shocks.

Comment

¶12. The UN Resident Coordinator in Rwanda gave an extremely dynamic presentation about the success of the One UN effort in Rwanda, and the enormous commitment of the GOR to good governance and measurable results for official development assistance. His commitment and enthusiasm, which was reinforced by the Rwandan Ambassador's emphasis on good governance, left a positive impression of the One UN program in Rwanda.

¶13. In response to the US delegate's query as to when there would be an independent evaluation of the eight One UN pilot programs, the UN representatives provided vague responses focusing on the newness of the program and consequent difficulty of evaluating it. After the meeting, one panelist clarified that a timeline for evaluation will likely be agreed during the UN General Assembly meeting in the fall. He further explained that a true evaluation of the One UN programs will be difficult, since each of the eight One UN programs worldwide is different, there having been no detailed criteria or indicators for achievement of the programs in place when the programs were designed.

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